



Montana Crop & Livestock Reporter

Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture

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HIGHLIGHTS

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2009 Selected Specialty Crops County Estimates

The USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Montana Field Office released county estimates for the following pulse and oilseed crops: lentils, dry peas, Austrian winter peas, canola, sunflower, and camelina. This is the tenth year of the data series for most commodities, but the second year camelina estimates were set. Funding for these county estimates was provided by the Montana Department of Agriculture. Estimates for dry beans, safflower, flaxseed, and mustard seed will be released at a later date.

Total lentil production in Montana for 2008 was 608,000 cwt. Sheridan was the number one lentil-producing county, with 410,000 cwt. Valley was in second place with 48,500 cwt, and McCone county was third with 18,400 cwt. Northeast district growers produced 90 percent of the state's lentil crop. Dry edible pea production totaled 2.5 million cwt for 2008. The Northeast district farmers produced 77 percent, or 1.9 million cwt, of the state's total. Valley county was the largest dry pea producer with 532,000 cwt, followed by Sheridan county with 518,000 cwt, and Daniels county with 404,000 cwt. Austrian winter pea production during 2008 totaled 29,000 cwt. Glacier county produced the most with 4,500 cwt, followed by Chouteau with 1,800 cwt produced. Central district farmers produced 33 percent, or 9,700 cwt, of the state's Austrian winter pea total, followed by the North Central district with 24 percent, or 7,100 cwt.

Canola farmers produced 14.1 million pounds in 2008. Pondera was the largest canola-producing county with 6.1 million pounds, or 43 percent of the state's total, followed by Flathead county with 2.0 million pounds, and Toole county with 1.4 million pounds. The North Central district produced 63 percent of the state's canola in 2008. Montana's sunflower production totaled 650,000 pounds in 2008. Reduction in planted acres and disclosure rules did not allow sunflower county data to be published for 2008. Montana produced 5.2 million pounds of camelina in 2008. Pondera county was the top producer with 1.9 million pounds, followed by Teton county with 537,000 pounds, and Chouteau county with 331,100 pounds. The North Central district produced 62 percent of the state's total camelina, while the Central district produced 18 percent of the total.

All of the preceding information, plus yield, planted, and harvested acres by county, district, and state are now available by visiting our website at www.nass.usda.gov/mt/. We compile the only annual county estimates for Montana based on an acreage and production survey of Montana farmers conducted in the fall of 2008. Thanks to those who participated!

April 1, 2009 Potato Stocks

Montana potato producers held 2.1 million cwt in storage on April 1, 2009, unchanged from the previous year. This number represents 61 percent of the 2008 Montana potato crop.

The 13 major potato States held 115 million cwt of potatoes in storage April 1, 2009, down 9 percent from a year ago and 5 percent below April 1, 2007. Potatoes in storage accounted for 31 percent of the 2008 fall storage States' production, slightly below April 1, 2008. Klamath Basin stocks totaled 1.45 million cwt on April 1, 2009, up 26 percent from a year ago.

Klamath Basin stocks include potatoes stored in California and Klamath County, Oregon.

Potato disappearance, at 253 million cwt, was 7 percent below April 1, 2008 and down 6 percent from 2007. Season-to-date shrink and loss, at 20.6 million cwt, was down 7 percent from the same date in 2008 and 8 percent below 2007. Processors in the 9 major States have used 134 million cwt of potatoes this season, down 7 percent from the same period last year and down 8 percent from 2 years ago. Dehydrating usage accounted for 24.9 million cwt of the total processing, down 15 percent from last year and 23 percent below the same period in 2007.

March U.S. Milk Production Down 0.2 Percent

Milk production in the 23 major States during March totaled 15.2 billion pounds, down 0.2 percent from March 2008. February revised production at 13.6 billion pounds, was down 2.7 percent from February 2008. The February revision represented a decrease of 23 million pounds or 0.2 percent from last month's preliminary production estimate.

Production per cow in the 23 major States averaged 1,788 pounds for March, 6 pounds below March 2008.

The number of milk cows on farms in the 23 major States was 8.48 million head, 15,000 head more than March 2008, but 4,000 head less than February 2009.

Milk production in the U.S. during the January - March quarter totaled 47.3 billion pounds, down 0.6 percent from the January - March quarter last year. The average number of milk cows in the U.S. during the quarter was 9.30 million head, 11,000 head more than the same period last year.

Montana's Rank in the Nation's Agriculture

ITEM	TOTAL	UNIT	PERIOD OR DATE	RANK	% U.S. Total
Number of farms and ranches	29,500	farms/ranches	2008	31	1.3
Land in farms and ranches	60,800,000	acres	2008	2	6.6
Average Farm Size	2,061	acres	2008	3	N/A
INCOME FROM CASH RECEIPTS, EXCLUDING GOVERNMENT PAYMENTS					
Total	2,394,304	thousand dollars	2007	34	0.8
Crops	1,237,053	thousand dollars	2007	30	0.8
Livestock	1,157,251	thousand dollars	2007	32	0.8
LIVESTOCK INVENTORY					
All Cattle and Calves	2,600,000	head	Jan. 1, 2009	10	2.8
All Cows	1,510,000	head	Jan. 1, 2009	9	3.7
Beef Cows	1,494,000	head	Jan. 1, 2009	7	4.7
Milk Cows	16,000	head	Jan. 1, 2009	39	0.2
Cattle on Feed	45,000	head	Jan. 1, 2009	24	0.3
All Sheep and Lambs	255,000	head	Jan. 1, 2009	7	4.4
Breeding Sheep	230,000	head	Jan. 1, 2009	6	5.4
Meat Goats	9,000	head	Jan. 1, 2009	36	0.4
Milk Goats	1,900	head	Jan. 1, 2009	35	0.6
Hogs and Pigs	175,000	head	Dec. 1, 2008	26	0.3
Chickens	510,000	head	Dec. 1, 2008	37	0.1
LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION					
Calf Crop	1,490,000	head	2008	7	4.1
Lamb Crop	235,000	head	2008	4	6.3
Pig Crop	371,000	head	2008	27	0.3
Wool Production	2,150,000	pounds	2008	7	6.5
Egg Production	115,000,000	eggs	2008	37	0.1
Honey Production	9,380,000	pounds	2008	6	5.8
CROP PRODUCTION					
All Wheat	164,730,000	bushels	2008	5	6.6
Winter Wheat	94,380,000	bushels	2008	6	5.1
Durum Wheat	10,830,000	bushels	2008	4	12.8
Other Spring Wheat	59,520,000	bushels	2008	4	10.9
Barley	37,740,000	bushels	2008	3	15.8
Oats	1,530,000	bushels	2008	17	1.7
All Hay	4,080,000	tons	2008	14	2.8
Alfalfa Hay	3,040,000	tons	2008	8	4.4
Other Hay	1,040,000	tons	2008	25	1.4
Dry Beans	191,000	cwt	2008	13	0.7
Pinto Beans	174,000	cwt	2008	8	1.7
Garbanzo Beans	17,000	cwt	2008	6	1.5
Lentils	608,000	cwt	2008	2	25.2
Dry Edible Peas	2,495,000	cwt	2008	2	20.3
Austrian Winter Peas	29,000	cwt	2008	2	27.9
Fall Potatoes	3,465,000	cwt	2008	13	0.9
Sugar Beets	823,000	tons	2008	7	3.1
Flaxseed	72,000	bushels	2008	3	1.3
Safflower	16,800,000	pounds	2008	2	5.4
Canola	14,134,000	pounds	2008	3	1.0
Corn for Grain	4,760,000	bushels	2008	37	1/
Corn for Silage	902,000	tons	2008	25	0.8

1/ Less than one-tenth of one percent.

March 2009 Red Meat Production

Montana slaughter plants produced 1.0 million pounds, dressed weight, of red meat during March 2009, up 10 percent from March 2008, but down 4 percent from February 2009. Cattle slaughter totaled 1,200 head, up 100 head from a year ago. The average live weight, at 1,202 pounds, increased 28 pounds from last year.

During March there were 600 hogs slaughtered, down 100 head from a year ago. The average live weight, at 249 pounds, decreased 15 pounds from last year. March sheep slaughter totaled 300 head, unchanged from March 2008. The average live weight increased 31 pounds to 116 pounds from last year.

Commercial red meat production for the United States totaled 4.14 billion pounds in March, up 1 percent from the 4.09 billion pounds produced in March 2008.

Beef production, at 2.14 billion pounds, was 2 percent above the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.73 million head, up slightly from March 2008. The average live weight was up 29 pounds from the previous year, at 1,305 pounds.

Veal production totaled 12.2 million pounds, 8 percent above March a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 79,800 head, up 12 percent from March 2008. The average live weight was down 10 pounds from last year, at 263 pounds.

Pork production totaled 1.97 billion pounds, up slightly from the previous year. Hog kill totaled 9.65 million head, down slightly from March 2008. The average live weight was up 1 pound from the previous year, at 272 pounds.

Lamb and mutton production, at 15.9 million pounds, was down slightly from March 2008. Sheep slaughter totaled 222,000 head, 4 percent below last year. The average live weight was

143 pounds, up 4 pounds from March a year ago.

January to March 2009 commercial red meat production was 12.1 billion pounds, down 3 percent from 2008. Accumulated beef production was down 2 percent from last year, veal was up 5 percent, pork was down 4 percent from last year, and lamb and mutton production was down 8 percent.

March U.S. Egg Production Up 1 Percent

U.S. egg production totaled 7.72 billion during March 2009, up 1 percent from last year. Production included 6.63 billion table eggs, and 1.09 billion hatching eggs, of which 1.02 billion were broiler-type and 75 million were egg-type. The total number of layers during March 2009 averaged 340 million, down slightly from last year. March egg production per 100 layers was 2,269 eggs, up 1 percent from March 2008.

All layers in the U.S. on April 1, 2009 totaled 341 million, down slightly from last year. The 341 million layers consisted of 283 million layers producing table or market type eggs, 54.3 million layers producing broiler-type hatching eggs, and 3.07 million layers producing egg-type hatching eggs. Rate of lay per day on April 1, 2009, averaged 73.9 eggs per 100 layers, up 2 percent from April 1, 2008.

Egg-type chicks hatched during March 2009 totaled 40.1 million, up 1 percent from March 2008. Eggs in incubators totaled 37.6 million on April 1, 2009, up slightly from a year ago.

Domestic placements of egg-type pullet chicks for future hatchery supply flocks by leading breeders totaled 277 thousand during March 2009, up 13 percent from March 2008.

Broiler-type chicks hatched during March 2009 totaled 783 million, down 6 percent from March 2008. Eggs in incubators totaled 625 million on April 1, 2009, down 7 percent from a year earlier.

Leading breeders placed 6.68 million broiler-type pullet chicks for future domestic hatchery supply flocks during March 2009, down 6 percent from March 2008.

U.S. Cattle on Feed Down 5 Percent

Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market in the United States for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head totaled 11.2 million head on April 1, 2009. The inventory was 5 percent below April 1, 2008. The inventory included 6.98 million steers and steer calves, down 5 percent from the previous year. This group accounted for 63 percent of the total inventory. Heifers and heifer calves accounted for 4.12 million head, down 4 percent from 2008.

Placements in feedlots during March totaled 1.80 million, 4 percent above 2008. Net placements were 1.75 million head. During March, placements of cattle and calves weighing less than 600 pounds were 300,000, 600-699 pounds were 340,000, 700-799 pounds were 592,000 and 800 pounds and greater were 570,000.

Marketings of fed cattle during March totaled 1.83 million, 1 percent below 2008.

Other disappearance totaled 50,000 during March, 21 percent below 2008. This is the lowest other disappearance for the month of March since the series began in 1996.

The Facts on USDA Reports and Prices

National Agricultural Statistics staff are often asked why prices always go down following the release of USDA crop and livestock reports. Most news accounts would lead you to believe that prices always "take a tumble," to use news media jargon, following the release of these reports. The fact is that prices go up about as often as they go down, and by about the same amount. We usually don't hear when prices go up following official reports, but we have the facts showing they do.

The tables below illustrate a comparison of wheat price changes following USDA reports. The tables

show the number of times prices increase and decrease after the release of reports over time and the average gains and declines. For example, if you look at the wheat prices table, you can see that for the period 1999 through 2008 wheat prices increased 26 times one day after the monthly Crop Production Reports, had no change 4 times, and decreased 19 times. The average increase was 7.3 cents and the average decrease was 6.0 cents. Wheat prices increased 24 times one week after the monthly Crop Production Reports, had no change 1 time, and decreased 24 times. The average increase was 19.7 cents and the average decrease was 17.0 cents. Similar findings occurred for corn and soybeans.

USDA reports in and of themselves do not determine the price. The actual supply that enters the marketplace along with domestic and export demand determine the price farmers receive for their products. It is true that the futures market and, in turn, the current cash market may go up or down following our reports. But these fluctuations are generally minor as the market has already made adjustments to expected supplies. One reason why farmers and others may believe that USDA reports drive down prices is because the media rarely emphasize price increases following the reports. As you can see from the attached tables, they are only telling half of the story.

Wheat Prices

Changes Following Crop Production Reports			
Report Date	Day Prior to Report	Day After Report	Week After Report
	Dollars per Bushel		
May 1999	2.76	2.84	2.78
June	2.85	2.79	2.69
July	2.40	2.39	2.38
August	2.65	2.57	2.67
Ann Report	2.81	2.71	2.62
May 2000	2.78	2.80	2.69
June	2.74	2.76	2.73
July	2.94	2.93	2.79
August	2.64	2.65	2.72
Ann Report	3.18	3.27	3.27
May 2001	3.34	3.42	3.50
June	3.27	3.29	3.24
July	3.01	3.03	3.16
August	3.03	3.03	3.03
Ann Report	3.12	3.10	3.04
May 2002	3.10	3.08	3.11
June	3.40	3.48	3.54
July	3.83	3.83	3.93
August	4.15	4.23	4.22
Ann Report	5.08	5.12	5.05
May 2003	3.81	3.91	3.95
June	3.89	3.84	3.36
July	2.99	3.02	3.16
August	3.62	3.70	3.97
Ann Report	3.66	3.70	3.57

Wheat Prices

Changes Following Crop Production Reports			
Report Date	Day Prior to Report	Day After Report	Week After Report
	Dollars per Bushel		
May 2004	4.14	4.08	4.03
June	4.01	3.94	3.92
July	3.84	3.89	3.95
August	3.53	3.47	3.48
Ann Report	3.90	3.79	3.73
May 2005	3.57	3.54	3.60
June	3.62	3.62	3.71
July	3.73	3.71	3.88
August	3.81	3.84	3.90
Ann Report	4.38	4.48	4.50
May 2006	4.96	5.05	5.30
June	5.08	5.03	4.88
July	5.42	5.34	5.05
August	4.85	4.76	4.72
Ann Report	5.21	5.21	5.30
May 2007	5.37	5.42	5.44
June	5.80	6.10	6.51
July	6.07	6.11	6.01
August	6.55	6.50	6.48
Ann Report	9.00	9.07	8.88
May 2008	9.13	8.96	8.72
June	8.46	8.67	9.26
July	8.54	8.70	8.39
August	8.08	8.10	8.73
Ann Report	6.70	6.77	5.93

COMING IN THE NEXT REPORTER

Ag Prices Received	Cattle and Beef Cow County
Hay Stocks	Estimates Available
Winter Wheat seedings	
Milk Production	

Steve Anderson, Director
 John Hilton, Deputy Director
 Wendy Bruski, Statistical Info Assistant
 10 W 15th Street, Helena, MT 59626
 406-441-1240 or 1-800-835-2612
www.nass.usda.gov/mt/ nass-mt@nass.usda.gov